



**Fig. 2-13. St. Georges Historic District, Gam's Store (lot 67), SEC Delaware and N. Main Streets.**

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

## 1. Name

historic Gassaway Watkins' Store and Post Office

and or common

## 2. Location

street &amp; number NEC Dupont Highway and McDonough Road (Rd 423) not for publication

city, town St. Georges Hundred X vicinity of McDonough's Corner

state Delaware code county New Castle code

## 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

## 4. Owner of Property

name George W. Thomas

street &amp; number R.D. 2, Box 355

city, town Middletown vicinity of state Delaware

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. New Castle County Recorder of Deeds

street &amp; number 800 French Street

city, town Wilmington state Delaware

## 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Delaware Cultural Resource Survey N-5187 has this property been determined eligible? yes ☒ nodate federal ☒ state county local

depository for survey records Delaware Bureau of Archaeology and Historic Preservation

city, town Dover state Delaware

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> moved	date early 19th century (not verified)
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			c. 1930

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Located at the intersection of the Dupont Highway and McDonough's Road at McDonough's Corner is this c. 1790 2-story, 3-register vernacular building with its mid-19th century 1-story rear ell. Reportedly, the house was first constructed on the west side of the Dupont Highway by the McDonough family, then moved across the road for use as a store in the 19th century. The building was moved from its site again in the 1930s when it was shifted eastwardly for construction of the northbound lanes of the Dupont Highway. This latter move explains the concrete masonry unit foundation upon which the house sits.

The house, used as a general store in the 19th century, and its rear ell, built for a post office, are constructed of frame and resided with asbestos shingles. An enclosed wrap-around porch fronts the main facade and side elevation of the c.1790 increment, masking the first floor which was altered during the Victorian era. Those alterations replaced original 6/6 double hung sash (extant at the second floor) with 2/2 double hung sash and installed the glazed and paneled central double doors which are framed by an entablature surround and backed by wood security "slides." These were closed at night to protect the shop entrance. Above the regularly-spaced second floor windows is a wooden box cornice. The building has a corrugated metal roof with an interior central chimney and an exterior end chimney.

Inside, the first floor is opened into a single room, encompassing the rear ell. With well-preserved plaster walls, the room is simply detailed. The south side of the enclosed wrap around porch functions as the kitchen. Along the north wall, the stair rises to the second floor; that stairhall has a c.1790 chairrail and corner post at its landing. Access to the second floor, used as living quarters, was not available.

Outbuildings generally are in poor to deteriorated condition except for a board and batten gable-roofed work shed moved to this site. The vertical board-sided shed and privy are nearing collapse.

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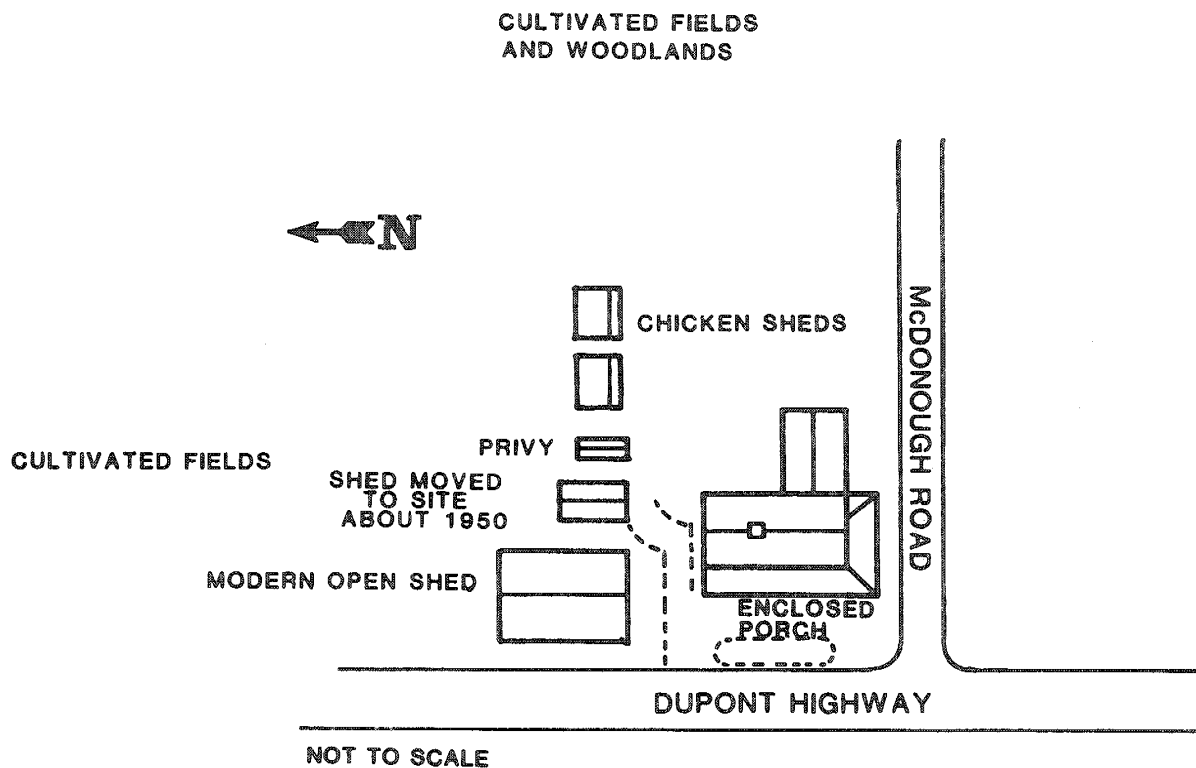
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Continuation sheet Gassaway Watkins' Store and Item number 7  
Post Office

Page 2



## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900- 1935	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** c. 1790; mid-19th century **Builder/Architect** unknown

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The store and post office at McDonough's Corner provided vital services to the residents of the village and nearby farmers for more than a century. Moved in the 1930s along with numerous other buildings fronting the Dupont Highway, the building also reflects a period in Delaware's transportation history. Because of its association as a local community landmark and a record of state highway development, the building appears eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A.

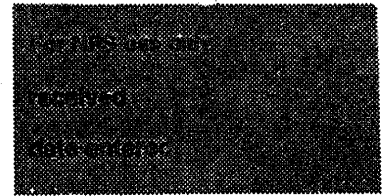
According to oral historical accounts, this building was constructed on the west side of the state highway (Rte. 13) in the 18th century by the MacDonoughs, then moved to the east side in the 19th century. Although this relocation has not yet been documented, evidence of the building's style, scale, and interior finishes supports a late 18th century construction date. Bills in the attic for "whiskey by the gallon", dating from 1813, also suggest the early construction and use of this building as a store.

The property upon which the building sits was originally part of Elm Grange (N-5181), a large farm tract to the north, a corner of which was sold by William Bowman to Gassaway Watkins for \$140.00 on April 25, 1855. Despite the 1855 date of title, it appears that Watkins, who owned and resided at the dwelling (N-5156) across Reedy Neck Island Road (McDonough Road), actually operated the store at McDonough as early as 1838\*. Originally a farmer, Watkins likely rented the property during the early years of his merchandizing business which he operated here for nearly forty years. During his tenancy, the rear wing was added for use as a post office. In addition to being a farmer and merchant, Watkins was involved in his community. In 1848 President Polk appointed him collector of the Port at Port Penn. He also served as a member of the Levy Court of New Castle and in 1874 was elected County Treasurer.

Gassaway Watkins died in 1877, leaving an estate in considerable debt. The brief inventory of Watkins' estate indicates his activity in peach farming which may have been related to his debt. According to his estate records, Watkins' neighbor, Zadoc A. Pool, builder of Monterey (N-432) posted a \$12,000 bond to cover Watkins' debts upon his demise.

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Continuation sheet Gassaway Watkins' Store and Item number 8  
Post Office

Page 2

At some period in the late-19th century, Harrison Vandegrift, a member of the locally prominent Vandegrift family, owners of Elm Grange, operated the store which remained in use as a general store until approximately 1930. The early 1930s date corresponds with the widening of Dupont Highway (Route 13) for additional lanes. Because of this road improvement, the building was shifted eastwardly and set upon a modern foundation. As such, this resource also reflects an important development in the state's transportation history. This association justifies the period of significance which ends in 1935. The building is currently used for commercial purposes as an antique shop on the first floor and a residence above.

\*Historical and Biographical Encyclopedia of Delaware (Wilmington, DE: Aldine Publishing and Engraving Company, 1882), p.350.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

see continuation sheet

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name Middletown

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A 

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4	3	7	1	2	9	0
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Zone Easting Northing

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Verbal boundary description and justification

see continuation sheet

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code

state	code	county	code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Carol A. Benenson, M.S. and Mark A. Bower, M.S.

organization KKFS, Inc.

date December 1986

street & number 1316 Arch Street

telephone 215-561-1050

city or town Philadelphia

state PA

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

☐ national ☒ state ☒ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title	date

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

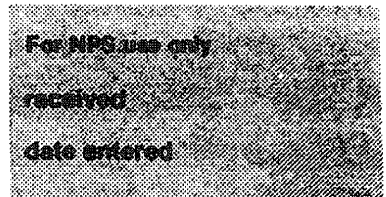
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet Gassaway Watkins' Item number 9 Page 2  
Store and Post Office

9. Major Bibliographical References

Historical and Biographical Encyclopedia of Delaware. Wilmington, DE: Aldine  
Publishing and Engraving Company, 1882. p. 350.

Hopkins, G.M. Co. Map of New Castle County, Delaware. Philadelphia: 1881.

Interview with George W. Thomas, owner, August 1986.

Pomeroy & Beers. Atlas of the State of Delaware. Philadelphia: 1868.

Rea, Samuel and Jacob Price. Map of New Castle County, from Original Survey.  
Philadelphia: Smith and Wister, 1849.

Scharf, Thomas J. History of Delaware 1609-1888. Vol. II. Port Washington, NY:  
Kennikat Press, 1888. p. 993.

State Archives, Letters of Administration of Gassaway Watkins, 1877. Dover, DE.



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Continuation sheet Gassaway Watkins'  
Store and Post Office

Item number 10

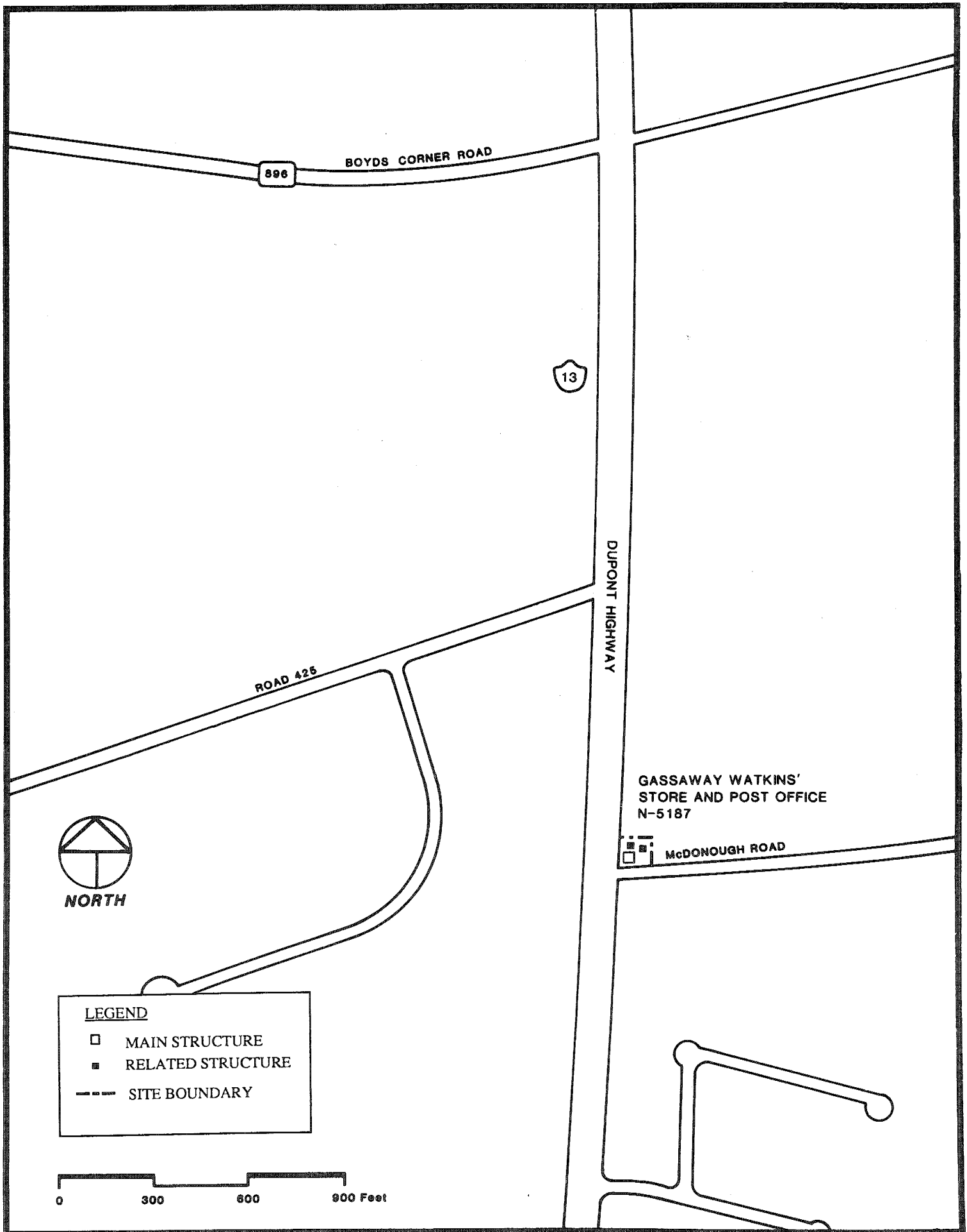
Page 2

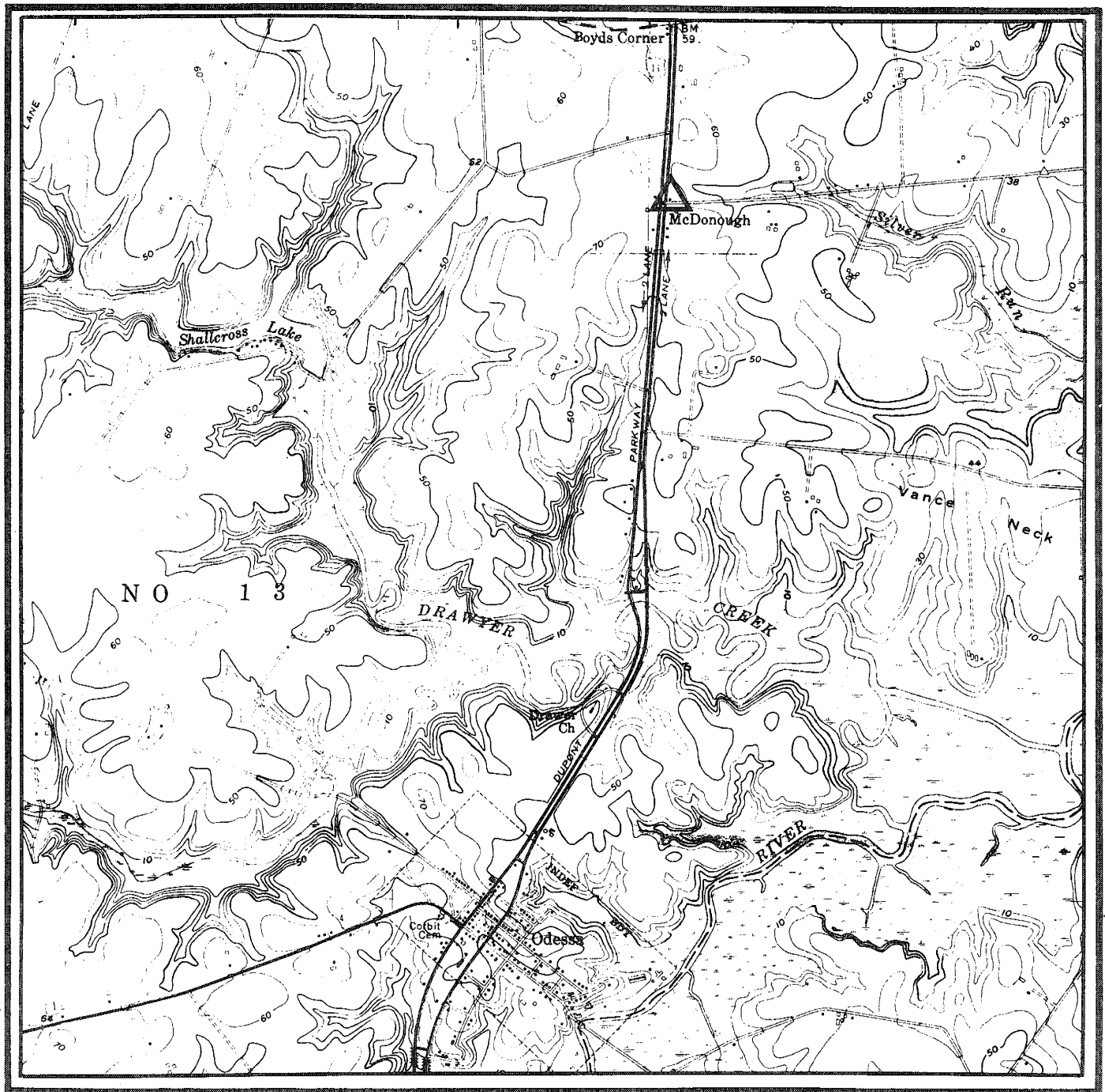
10. Verbal boundary description and justification

Beginning at the intersection of the Easterly right of way line of the State Highway and the center line of the County Road leading from said Village of McDonough to Reedy Island Neck and Port Penn, thence with the said Easterly right of way line of the State Highway, North two degrees and nineteen minutes East one hundred and twenty and seventy five one hundredths feet to a corner for this land and land of Mitchell Golt; thence with a line of said land of Mitchell L. Golt, South eighty seven degrees and forty one minutes East one hundred and nineteen and seventy five one hundredths feet, to another corner; thence with another line of said land of Mitchell L. Golt; South two degrees and nineteen minutes West one hundred and seven and ninety two one hundredths feet to a point in the center line of the above mentioned County Road; thence with the said center line of said County Road, South eighty six degrees and two minutes West seventy feet to another point in the said center line of said County Road; and thence continuing with the said center line of said County Road, Westerly, fifty one and five tenths feet to the place of beginning.

The boundaries describe the entire .33-acre tax parcel that encompasses the nominated building and its immediate surrounds.

Tax parcel no. 13.013.00.038



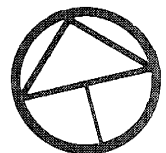


**△ GASSAWAY WATKINS' STORE &  
POST OFFICE (N-5187)**

Dupont Parkway (Rt. 13)  
New Castle Co., Del.  
UTM: 18.444 120.437 1290

**SOURCE:**

USGS MIDDLETOWN QUADRANGLE  
Delaware  
7.5 Minute Series



**NORTH**



**Fig. 2-14. Gassaway Watkins' Store and Post Office (N-5187), Main (west) and south side elevations.**

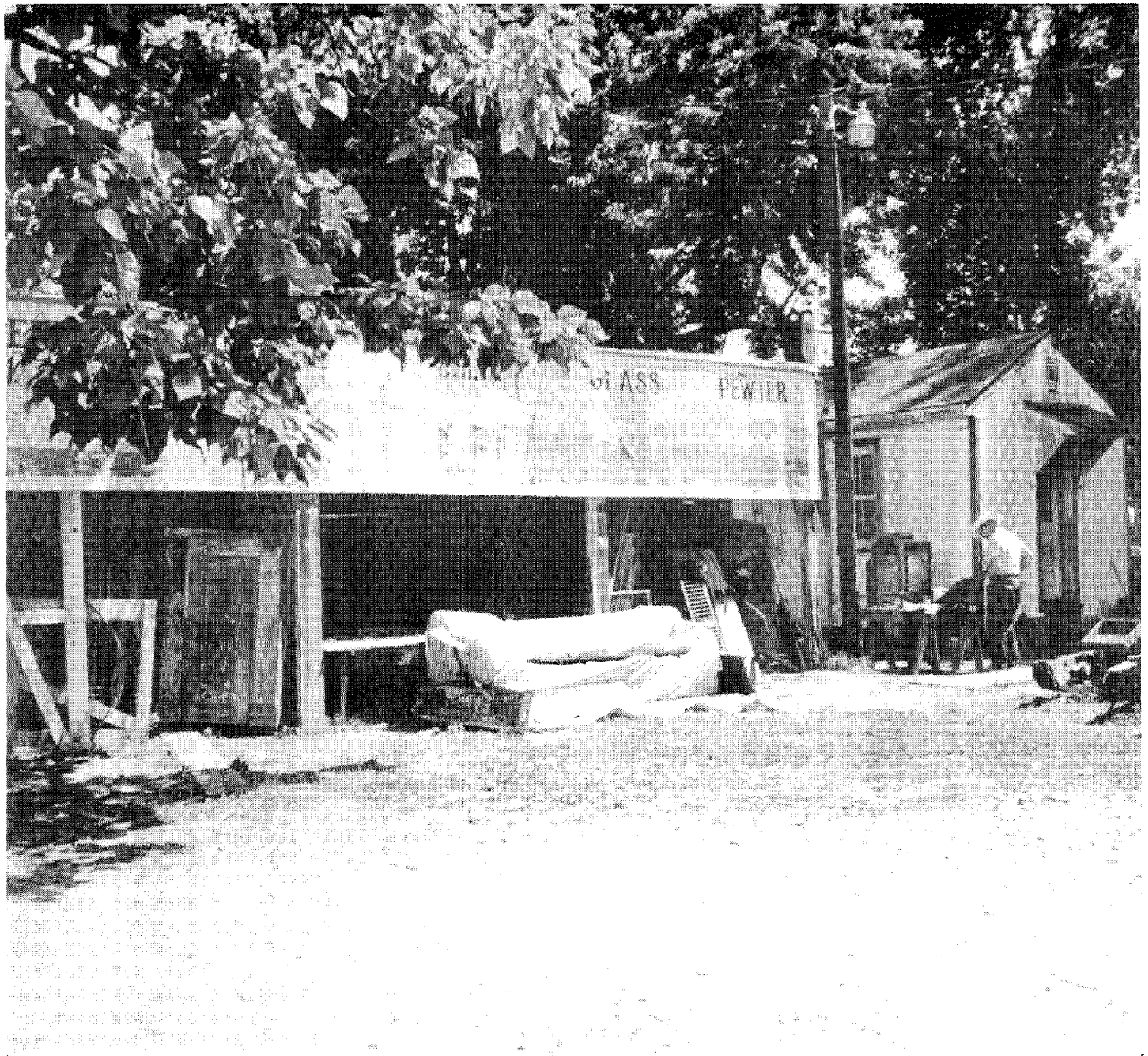


**Fig. 2-15. Gassaway Watkins' Store and Post Office (N-5187), Detail of shop doors.**





**Fig. 2-16. Gassaway Watkins' Store and Post Office (N-5187), Rear ell, looking northwest.**



**Fig. 2-17. Gassaway Watkins' Store and Post Office (N-5187), Work shed, looking northeast.**



**Fig. 2-18. Gassaway Watkins' Store and Post office (N-5187), Miscellaneous outbuildings, looking north.**



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received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*

Type all entries—complete applicable sections

## 1. Name

historic Gassaway Watkins House

and or common

## 2. Location

street & number SEC Dupont Highway & McDonough Road (Rd. 423) not for publication

city, town St. Georges Hundred X vicinity of McDonough's Corner

state Delaware code county New Castle code

## 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<u>  </u> district	<u>  </u> public	<u>  </u> occupied	<u>  </u> agriculture
<u>  </u> building(s)	<u>  </u> private	<u>  </u> unoccupied	<u>  </u> commercial
<u>  </u> structure	<u>  </u> both	<u>  </u> work in progress	<u>  </u> educational
<u>  </u> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<u>  </u> entertainment
<u>  </u> object	<u>  </u> in process	<u>  </u> yes: restricted	<u>  </u> government
	<u>  </u> being considered	<u>  </u> yes: unrestricted	<u>  </u> industrial
		<u>  </u> no	<u>  </u> military
			<u>  </u> museum
			<u>  </u> park
			<u>  </u> private residence
			<u>  </u> religious
			<u>  </u> scientific
			<u>  </u> transportation
			<u>  </u> other:

## 4. Owner of Property

name Earl Deputy

street & number R.D. 354

city, town Middletown vicinity of state Delaware

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. New Castle County Recorder of Deeds

street & number 800 French Street

city, town Wilmington state Delaware

## 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Delaware Cultural Resource Survey N-5156 has this property been determined eligible?    yes    no

date    federal    state    county    local

depository for survey records Delaware Bureau of Archaeology and Historic Preservation

city, town Dover state Delaware

## 7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date c. 1930

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Located at the intersection of Dupont Highway and McDonough Road at McDonough's Corner is the circa 1840 Gassaway Watkins House. This Greek Revival-style building is a 2 1/2-story side hall double pile house with a side 2-story kitchen wing. Based upon visual inspection of interior finishes and cellar joists, the wing appears to have been built as an integral part of the original house.

The house sits upon a rusticated cast stone foundation that dates from the 1930s, the decade during which the Dupont Highway was widened for a northbound lane and buildings were shifted to the east. Constructed of frame, the house has been resided with aluminum. A Colonial Revival porch, dating from circa 1900, fronts the central three bays of the five-bay house. Behind a storm door is the original vertically-paneled door with four-light transom. Windows are 6/6 double hung except at the first floor of the kitchen wing where sash are 2/2 double hung; window trim has been panned with aluminum. The house has a wooden box cornice and a standing seam metal gabled roof. The side elevations are fenestrated by 6/6 double hung windows; kitchen windows have been altered. The rear facade has had its earlier porch removed and a modern one added.

The interior is laid out as a side hall plan with double parlor and a side kitchen wing. The stair has a simple balustrade with turned newels. Windows and doors feature fluted surrounds with bosses. Original Greek Revival mantels are intact in the parlors, simpler ones in the second floor bedrooms. Floors are of heart pine. Throughout the house, the condition and integrity of woodwork and plaster are excellent.

Nearly all of the original outbuildings--barn, granary, and chicken house-- were destroyed in a 1960s fire. A smokehouse, now sided with aluminum, remains behind the house. A concrete masonry unit garage was constructed in the 1960s or '70s.

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